

STORY 20.

FEARLESSNESS IN THE CAUSE OF TRUTH.

IN speaking out his beliefs and convictions a Muslim will face all odds without flinching, and opposition will only strengthen his resolution. It is cowardice to keep truth concealed and not to proclaim it to the world from house tops.

1. It is related of (Hazrat) Abu Zar Ghaffary that when he declared his Islam at Mecca, the persecution of the Prophet at the hands of the Quresh was in full swing. So the Prophet told (Hazrat) Abu Zar to proceed to his home and convert his own people. But (Hazrat) Abu Zar in a voice thrilling with emotion declared that before leaving for his home he would first proclaim his faith in the face of the infidels of Mecca.

Now, he was all alone, and had no relations or friends to protect him, but in spite of this he made his way to the Haram and shouted at the top of his voice "I bear witness that God is one and I bear witness that Mohammad (Peace be upon him) is the Prophet of God" When the sound of this formula fell upon the ears of the Quresh they set upon him with the fury of wolves, and began to belabour him with stones, bones, and fists until he fell senseless to the ground. Thinking him dead they left him. When he came to himself his body was all bruised

and covered with blood. This cruel treatment did not curb his zeal, nor did it deter him from openly proclaiming his faith to the Quresh. Next day, he did the same with the same result.

2. (Hazrat) Abdullah bin Masud was the sixth convert to Islam in order of time. Before him no Muslim had ever dared to recite the Quran in the Kaaba. After his conversion the Muslims one day came together, when one of them said "Up to this time the Quresh have never heard the Quran being recited openly by any one. Let one of us go and recite it in the Kaaba." As there was fear of violence, and the Muslims were small in numbers it was natural that they should hesitate. But (Hazrat) Abdullah volunteered himself for the adventure. The others said "Your courage is commendable, but to court death when life can be saved without dishonour is not desirable. You have no powerful connections. We want some one who should be well-connected, so that if the infidels should set upon him, he should have some one to defend him." (Hazrat) Abdullah however insisted on having this honour, saying that God would take care of him.

It was midday when the Quresh used to assemble in the Kaaba. They were startled by a strange recitation. At first they could not make out what it was. But when they listened they recognised that it was the Quran that (Hazrat) Abdullah was reciting. It was enough to rouse their fanatical fury, and they rushed upon him all at once. He bore their beating without offering any resistance, and when he came back to his